

Matthew 13:2

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And great multitudes were gathered together unto him, so that he went into a ship, and sat; and the whole multitude stood on the shore.

Analysis

The crowd necessitates boat: 'great multitudes were gathered together unto him, so that he went into a ship, and sat; and the whole multitude stood on the shore' (και συνηχθησαν προς αυτον οχλοι πολλοι ωστε αυτον εις πλοιον εμβαντα καθησθαι και πας ο οχλος επι τον αιγιαλον εισηκει). 'Great multitudes' (οχλοι πολλοι) indicates massive crowds drawn by Jesus' teaching and miracles. Getting 'into a ship' (εις πλοιον) provided separation, safety, and acoustics. Water carries sound well; the shore creates natural amphitheater. Jesus 'sat' (καθησθαι) in boat while crowd 'stood' (εισηκει) on shore—teaching posture. This image captures Jesus' ministry: pursued by crowds seeking truth yet maintaining appropriate distance for effective teaching. The boat prevents crushing while enabling communication.

Historical Context

Galilean fishing boats were approximately 25-30 feet long, sturdy enough for Jesus and disciples. Speaking from boat to shore was common teaching method. Crowds grew enormous as Jesus' fame spread—thousands gathered (14:21, 15:38). Without amplification, natural acoustics were crucial. The geographic setting enabled teaching large crowds while maintaining order. Modern archaeological excavations have recovered first-century fishing boats from Galilee's shores, confirming Gospel accounts' historical reliability. Early church saw these boat teachings as fulfilling Isaiah's prophecy of light to Galilee (Isaiah 9:1-2).

Related Passages

1 John 4:8 — God is love

1 Corinthians 13:4 — Characteristics of love

Study Questions

1. What does the crowd's size reveal about hunger for Jesus' teaching?
2. How can we create appropriate boundaries while remaining accessible for ministry?
3. What role does wisdom about setting and logistics play in effective teaching?

Interlinear Text

καὶ	συνήχθησαν	πρὸς	αὐτὸν	ὄχλος	πολλοί	ὥστε	
And	were gathered together	unto	him	multitude	great	so that	
G2532	G4863	G4314	G846	G3793	G4183	G5620	
αὐτὸν	εἰς	τὸ	πλοῖον	ἐμβάντα	καθῆσθαι	καὶ	πᾶς
him	into	G3588	a ship	he went	and sat	And	the whole
G846	G1519		G4143	G1684	G2521	G2532	G3956
ὁ	ὄχλος	ἐπὶ	τὸν	αἰγιαλὸν	εἰστήκει		
G3588	multitude	on	G3588	the shore	stood		
	G3793	G1909		G123	G2476		

Additional Cross-References

Luke 5:3 (Parallel theme): And he entered into one of the ships, which was Simon's, and prayed him that he would thrust out a little from the land. And he sat down, and taught the people out of the ship.

Mark 4:1 (Parallel theme): And he began again to teach by the sea side: and there was gathered unto him a great multitude, so that he entered into a ship, and sat in the sea; and the whole multitude was by the sea on the land.

Matthew 4:25 (Parallel theme): And there followed him great multitudes of people from Galilee, and from Decapolis, and from Jerusalem, and from Judaea, and from beyond Jordan.

Matthew 15:30 (Parallel theme): And great multitudes came unto him, having with them those that were lame, blind, dumb, maimed, and many others, and cast them down at Jesus' feet; and he healed them:

Genesis 49:10 (Parallel theme): The sceptre shall not depart from Judah, nor a lawgiver from between his feet, until Shiloh come; and unto him shall the gathering of the people be.